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UNCLAS NAIROBI 005317

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R AF/PD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OEXC](#) [SCUL](#) [KE](#)

SUBJECT: REINVIGORATING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY CULTURAL AND SPORTS PROGRAMS

REF: STATE 222516

1. Embassy Nairobi places a high value on cultural and sports programs and looks forward to working with ECA to enhancing cultural and sports exchanges throughout Kenya. The following are replies to questions posed in reftel
2. Last year we used cultural and sports programs to promote our "Counter-terrorism," "Democracy Promotion," "Global Health," "Environmental Protection" and "International Public Opinion" MPP goals. Our programs are designed to gain access and reinforce relationships with Muslim and underserved Kenyan communities. With these communities, our cultural and sports outreach efforts serve to challenge negative public opinions and anti-U.S. policy stereotypes.
3. We have used the full range of cultural and sports programs available. Last year along the coast in Lamu and Malindi we programmed the "Two American Icons" exhibit which exposed prominent African American artists to wide audiences in vulnerable areas that are typically underserved. We similarly programmed Jazz performer Freddy Bryant and a number of Blues and Gospel performers in Nairobi and Kisumu. Culture Connect Envoy Ntar Mwine gave a very powerful performance of his one-man play "Biro" in Nairobi and Mombasa. The ECA sponsored African premiere of "Ray" was an outstanding success. Throughout the year we placed paper shows in venues around Nairobi, such as the August 7th Memorial Park (site of the former embassy), in Mombasa and along the coast. Last fall we worked together with USAID to organize a public-private Hoops4Africa exchange featuring professional men and women basketball players. All of these programs reached out to the broad range of Kenyan audiences with special emphasis to underserved populations skeptical of U.S. policies and influence.
4. Our constraints are primarily financial and staffing, typical of other posts. Last year we fully allocated our budget for such programs. Our cultural staff, which is also responsible for our IV, Fulbright and other exchange programs, consists of a CAO and three Kenyan LES. Last year's cultural programming level in Kenya was consistent with that level of staffing.
5. We regularly partner with the private sector and other embassies in our cultural programming. The Lamu festival, which PAS was an original sponsor five years ago, has grown into a national event due to its partnership with the Kenyan Ministry of Cultural Heritage and co-sponsorship with the German and French embassies. The U.S. based firm Land O'Lakes helped sponsor Hoops4Africa. The Carnivore Restaurant in Nairobi and the Fort Jesus Museum in Mombasa have provided and/or subsidized free venues.
6. The above reflects only a cross section of the types of cultural and sports programs we engaged in last year. With each event, the audience was carefully selected with the goal of reaching out to targeted MPP audiences. Regional balance throughout Kenya was also always a goal. However, there is also the potential to do more. For instance, the former world record marathon holder Tegla Lourepe recently asked that we assist her school and Peace Foundation located along the Kenya - Uganda border. This is an area regularly suffering from cross-border tensions due to tribal and cattle migrations. Under the motto "Peace Through Sports," Tegla has succeeded in bringing communities on both sides of the border together under the common goals of educational and athletic advancement. This year, with adequate grant funds and an ECA supported exchange program (proposal currently being developed), we hope to assist her efforts, which would address our MPP goal 5 - "Resolution of Regional Conflicts."
7. Embassy Nairobi appreciates R's continued support for cultural and sports programming.

